

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 301061

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, MASS, MI, US

SUBJECT: MALAWI, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SECURITY SUPPORTING
ASSISTANCE (SSA)

1. YOU WILL BE RECEIVING BY SEPTTEL THE TEXT OF A DRAFT
HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVANCE REPORT ON MALAWI, TOGETHER
WITH A REQUEST THAT YOU UPDATE, CORRECT, AND CLEAR IT.

2. AS THAT TELEGRAM EXPLAINS, THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED
TO SUBMIT SUCH A REPORT TO THE CONGRESS ON EACH PROPOSED
RECIPIENT AS PART OF THE PRESENTATION MATERIALS FOR
SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. SINCE WE HAVE BEEN PLANNING
TO FUND ALL ASSISTANCE TO SOUTHERN AFRICA IN FY 78 FROM
SSA, THIS WOULD MEAN THAT FUNDING FOR CONTINUED ASSISTANCE
TO BUNDA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE WOULD BE SHIFTED FROM
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO THE SSA ACCOUNT, AND THAT SHIFT IN
TURN WOULD REQUIRE SUBMISSION OF A HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVANCE
REPORT ON MALAWI. UNDER PRESENT LEGISLATION, NO SUCH
REPORT IS REQUIRED TO ACCOMPANY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

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SUBMISSIONS.

3. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT INCLUSION OF MALAWI IN THE SSA COLUMN FOR FY 78, AND SUBMISSION OF THE REQUIRED REPORT, WOULD:

A) ALMOST CERTAINLY DRAW PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL ATTENTION AND CRITICISM TO MALAWI'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD, HARMING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WHILE EFFECTING NO CHANGE IN MALAWI'S INTERNAL PRACTICES, AND

B) MIGHT WELL RESULT IN MALAWI'S BEING STRUCK FROM THE AID AUTHORIZATION BILL, IN WHICH CASE WE WOULD BE HARD-PRESSED TO AVERT A CUT-OFF IN FUNDING FOR BUNDA IN FY 78.

4. ONE ALTERNATIVE WE ARE CONSIDERING WOULD BE TO SEVER MALAWI FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA FOR PURPOSES OF AID AUTHORIZATION THIS YEAR, CONTINUING TO FUND ASSISTANCE TO BUNDA FROM DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE. THERE IS SOME CONCERN IN AID THAT THIS WOULD MERELY HIGHLIGHT MALAWI'S PROBLEMS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA, AND WE SHOULD ALSO NOTE THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD ELIMINATE MALAWI FROM EVEN THEORETICAL ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE FROM A PROPOSED SOUTHERN AFRICAN SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FUND, WHICH IS DESIGNED TO PERMIT A FLEXIBLE RESPONSE TO EMERGENT NEEDS BROUGHT ON BY DEVELOPMENTS TO THE SOUTH OF YOU. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER THAT WE HAVE PERSUASIVE ARGUMENTS THAT FOR THIS PURPOSE MALAWI SHOULD NOT LOGICALLY BE LUMPED TOGETHER WITH, FOR EXAMPLE, ZAIRE, ZAMBIA, AND BOTSWANA, AND THAT IT MAKES MORE ECONOMIC SENSE TO CONTINUE AID TO MALAWI IN THE CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE MODE.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: BEFORE MAKING A DECISION ON THE MALAWI FUNDING, WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE BOTH YOUR VIEWS AND THE UPDATED HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT IN HAND. BECAUSE OF THE VERY TIGHT SCHEDULE INVOLVED IN PREPARATION OF THE AID CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION DOCUMENT, HOWEVER, WE WILL NEED BOTH BY WASHINGTON COB MONDAY, DECEMBER 13. ROBINSON

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